





GIVEN BY

RECORD

OF

GOVERNOR PARSONS, OF ALABAMA;
ALABAMA GOVERNORS,

AND

ALABAMA SLAVE CODE.

He went to Alabama in 1835 from Herkimer Co., N. Y., and was little known until the breaking out of the rebellion, although he was in the Legislature of 1859 which resolved that the election of a Republican President would be good cause for dissolving the Union and voted \$200,000 to equip eight thousand men as a state force to carry out the Resolution.

On the 17th of Jan., Mr. Isly, from the Committee of Ways and Means reported a bill to issue two millions in State bonds to provide for the military defence of the State. It required executors, administrators, trustees and guardians to invest the funds and property belonging to the estates of their wards in these bonds. Mr. Cletheral moved to strike out this section, which motion was lost, Mr. Parsons voting in the negative. Mr. Cletheral then moved to amend by adding, "with the authority of the proper Chancery or Probate Court first obtained." This too, was lost, Mr. Parsons voting in the negative. The bill was passed and the estates of widows and orphans thus lost, and they reduced to beggary, while the late Convention confirmed all legislative and judicial acts done during the war.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, Montgomery, Aug. 18, 1863.—Mr. Parsons introduced the following resolutions :

Be it resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Ala., in General Assembly convened—That our confidence in the patriotism and ability of President Davis is unabated ; and that the vicissitudes of war and the reverses of battle cannot shake it ; and we hereby tender to him our hearty thanks for his good labors in the cause of our common country, together with the assurance of our continued candid support to the extent of our resources. May God prolong his life, and give him strength to meet the demand of the present and future.

The second resolution instructed the rebel senators and representatives to use their utmost exertions to procure an increase of pay for privates and non-commissioned officers in the rebel army—and the third di-

rected the Governor to communicate a copy to "His Excellency, Jefferson Davis, President of Confederate States," and to "each of the Senators and Representatives from Ala., in the rebel Congress.

Our Montgomery correspondent writes under date, "Dec. 29, 1865."

"Since the date of your letter, I have been occupied in looking up the documents called for by you, and have succeeded only in finding the speech (which I enclose) delivered by Gov. Parsons in support of his resolutions, and that in a mutilated form. Just previous to the delivery of this speech, Dr. Ware, a citizen of this place, and violent secessionist, charged Parsons with being a *reconstructionist*. Parsons, on hearing this, met Dr. W., and denounced him as a liar and a slanderer, and threatened him with personal violence."

The copy of the speech sent is on a fragment of a newspaper printed on flimsy, yellowish paper, and old type, with the name and top part of the columns torn off, but with rates of advertising and date "Saturday evening, October 8, 1864" left : a fragment of an article signed

"T. H. WATTS,
Governor of Ala.,"

is in the column just above the article we copy, and the bottom of the second column, on which the speech is, is filled out with an account of "The military operations before Petersburg." Both sides of the six columns are filled with secesh matter. But the Resolutions and the speech.

RESOLUTION

In favor of opening negotiations for peace, offered by Mr. Parsons, of Talladega, in the House of Representatives of the State of Alabama, at the special session, September, 1864.

Whereas, Abraham Lincoln, as President of the United States, and commander-in-chief of the army and navy thereof, and the friends and supporters of his administration, have declared that negotiations for peace cannot be entertained, except upon the restoration of the Union in its territorial integrity and the abolition of slavery, and that the existing war must be prosecuted till the men of these Confederate States are compelled to submit to these terms, or are snjugated, and, if necessary, to secure that end, exterminated, their lands confiscated, and their women and children driven forth as wanderers on the face of the earth, and

Whereas, The re-election of Abraham Lincoln to the office of President of the United States is advocated by many, if not all of his supporters, upon these grounds, and that there is no other way to terminate the war, insisting that there is no disposition on the part of the people of these States to enter into negotiations for peace, except on the distinct admission of the separate independence of these States as a basis, and

Whereas, at a recent convention held in the City of Chicago, a numerous and powerful party has declared its willingness, if successful, to stop fighting and open negotiations with us on the basis of the Federal Constitution as it is, and the restoration of the Union under it.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Alabama, in General Assembly convened,

That we sincerely desire peace if the aforesaid party is successful, we are willing and ready to open negotiations for peace on the basis indicated in the platform adopted by said convention, our sister States of this Confederacy being willing thereto.

This preamble and resolution being under consideration, Mr. Parsons made, in substance, the following remarks :

Mr. Speaker:—The re-election of Abraham Lincoln renders a continuance of the present war inevitable. His defeat by the party that has nominated Gen. McClellan will as certainly result in a cessation of arms and an effort to open negotiations for peace.

The terms which Mr. Lincoln proposes as the only basis on which he will consent to negotiation for peace are "a restoration of the Union in its entire territorial integrity and the abolition of slavery." These terms cannot be accepted by us, and will not, while we have any power left to resist oppression. They are, in fact, subjugation ; because the power that can enforce these terms as a basis of negotiation, can impose others, also.

It is not submission, merely, to the loss of so much property in slaves at the bidding of power, but it is submission to the de-

struction of society itself, if the proclamation of Abraham Lincoln was enforced in these States. The white race could not remain there, at least that portion of it whose intelligence, energy and moral worth alone impart value to the institutions of society, and render desirable. This we know would be the result, whatever he and his co-workers may think to the contrary.

The moral power of our position is, therefore, very great. We stand before the world, while that proclamation remains in force, as men fighting for everything which an intelligent Christian people hold dear. The nations may hold aloof ; lift not a hand, raise not a voice, but the mind, the conscience, the heart of every man who knows our condition and the stern realities by which we are surrounded, cannot withhold its sympathy or resist the conviction that we are right, that no sacrifice of life and treasure which is necessary to sustain such a cause can be too great. It is this conviction which has inspired us with a unity and determination of purpose, such as no other people of modern times have manifested. It is this conviction which will sustain them to the end.

If Lincoln is re-elected, he and his friends will claim that it is an endorsement of his administration, and that he is authorized to complete the execution of his plans of emancipation, regardless of the cost to themselves, or the ruin which it brings on the people of these States.

There is now an opportunity to drive him from power and institute a new order of things in the United States, by means of the ballot-box. A numerous and powerful party are engaged in the effort. Success is as important to them as it is to us ; for everything they hold dear is involved in the issue. Can we remain idle or indifferent ? Shall we not be false to our cause, to ourselves and to our posterity, if we do ?

The adoption of this resolution will enable the friends of peace to combat successfully the false assertions of the friends of Lincoln and war. Already, the indications are favorable. Seward, his Secretary of State, in his recent speech at Auburn, endeavored to show that the policy of the Administration is similar in this respect to that of the friends of peace.

The farther prosecution of this war for the purposes professed by Lincoln is not popular with those who must enter the ranks and expose themselves not only to all its hardships and dangers, but also to the diseases peculiar to our climate. The efforts they make to obtain substitutes of any color and at any price, the threatened draft, all go to prove it.

The opportunity of relieving themselves from all this is presented in the coming election. I think the great majority of these will avail themselves of it, and vote with the party that is pledged to stop fighting and resort to the arts of kindness and statesmanship to bring about a peaceable settlement. To them the question presents itself thus : Lincoln ; the war ; the draft, or a substitute

obtained at any price. On the other hand McClellan and peace. Can there be much doubt which these will prefer who must go to the ranks, or who are now there? Without doubt the quartermasters and contractors, the spoilsman, and those who occupy bomb-proof positions under this Administration, will shout, "The war must go on!" "We must fight it out!" "All hope of free government is forever lost, unless we crush the rebels and abolish slavery." But the men who must enter the ranks in the bullet department will understand all that.

For these reasons and many others, some of which I shall have time to notice before I take my seat, I urge the adoption of this resolution *now*. At the same time, let us strengthen our military resources by every means in our power, so that, if we should fail to negotiate a peace on honorable terms, we shall be ready and better prepared to continue the war. In this way we shall employ all of our powers. Man is endowed with both physical and intellectual capacity. But to what purpose is the latter given us if we employ it alone in directing the former? Moral influences, for the most part, govern the world. The time is past when mere brute force can control men.*

* * * And they never ceased in their efforts until he issued his proclamation abolishing slavery. Then they rallied to his side with a zeal which a fanaticism can alone inspire. That proclamation secured the moral influence of every abolition society in Great Britain, from Exeter Hall down; from "John Groat's house to Land's End." The value of that influence is shown by the immense emigration to the United States since this war began. An extract from a newspaper published in the City of Cork, which was republished in some of our papers, states that, "before the war in the United States, one ship per week was sufficient to supply the demands of emigrants from that port; now one ship per day is not sufficient." This shows the practical value of the moral influence of that sentiment in that country. The high price offered to induce emigration, by these agents of those who must either furnish a substitute or go to the war, and into the ranks, in person, in connection with the moral influence brought to bear on the deluded and oppressed poor of that country has enabled Lincoln to get almost as many men, in this way, as he has lost since the war began.

Still another important view presents itself. It is this. If the parties to this destructive war would stop fighting, and open negotiations for peace, this would induce England and France, if anything would, to interpose and offer terms to the Confederacy which they now withhold and will continue to do, so long as the war goes on.

I have never had any faith in English intervention, and but little of it from France. The interest and policy of these powers are, to a certain extent, the same. Both want one great staple and our market for their

merchandize. Each, having a large commercial marine, would like to do our carrying trade. But there are other things which they desire more. They want, most of all, Republican governments broken up and destroyed, effectually and forever. They want the colossal Republic divided into as many separate governments as possible. This is not from any hostility to us as a people, but because they regard the spectacle of thirty millions of freemen, governing themselves by means of the ballot-box, obeying such laws and paying such taxes only as they may think fit to impose on themselves, in the enjoyment of a degree of prosperity unequalled in the history of the world, dangerous to the peace and security of their own system of government. Now the Union is severed, and the two Republics are now waging war with each other on a scale which may well cause kings and despots to tremble at the power of the people. There are but two contingencies in which it will be their policy to interpose. If they saw that one was about to be subjugated by the other, and unity of empire restored by force of arms, or if we were to stop fighting and open negotiations for peace, they would, in my opinion, interpose to prevent the reconstruction of one government—especially a Republican government. But while the parties have strength to fight and the war goes on, they will not interpose. If they do not wish us to destroy each other, their policy renders them willing to stand aloof and let us do it. In this way we prove the truth, as they think, of what they have always told their own people, viz: that man is incapable of self-government, and that the ignorant masses must submit to be governed by the intelligent few, who are alone capable of it; they must bend their necks to the yoke, and bend their backs to the burdens which it is their lot to bear. They (the rulers) point them to the war that is now raging, and to the awful destruction of life and property on this continent as proof positive of all they say.

They wish to see the same state of things established here that exists in Europe. There Russia keeps a standing army of 1,100,000 men; Austria, one of 700,000; Prussia, about the same; France, one of 600,000; and England one of 321,000, besides the largest navy in the world. These five great powers, as they are called, have thus 3,421,000 men in arms. *For what? For what?* To keep the people in subjection, and to watch each other!

They want these two Republics to agree on some conventional line, commencing at some point on the Atlantic and stretching westward to the Pacific, mark it with forts and custom-houses, soldiers and revenue-officers. This we must do, because there is no natural means of division. A difference in language which God Himself created for the express purpose of scattering the children of men on the face of the earth, constitutes the first cause of divisions which we read of. Color constitutes another. Mountains, rivers, lakes, seas and oceans, another;

* Here a portion is torn off.

after these the line must be purely conventional.

These governments will be rivals. They will watch each other. Large armies and navies must be maintained by each for that purpose. Thus, England and France will be relieved of further apprehensions, for here will be an opportunity to take sides and keep up an American balance of power.

I have always been of opinion, since the first gun was fired at Fort Sumpter, that the Union was gone—forever gone; and that "reconstruction," however desirable it might be, is an impossibility. I have always expressed it, both in public speeches and in private conversation. I see no reason to change it. The immense war debt contracted by each party; the thousands who have fallen in battle or by disease; the tens of thousands who have been wounded and crippled for life; the broken in health and constitution; our desolated homes, our cities and towns in ruins; our fields laid waste; together with the terrible passions which have been aroused, are difficulties, which in my judgement, are insurmountable. Can we reasonably suppose that the North will consent to be taxed to pay our war debt? a debt which the Abolitionists say was contracted in an unholy rebellion against the best government the world ever saw. Or does any sane man suppose we will consent to pay their war debt, contracted in sending armies and navies to burn our towns and cities, to lay waste our country, whose soldiers have robbed and murdered our peaceful inhabitants?

No, Mr. Speaker, the Union will never be reconstructed. What is to take its place? I confess Sir, our path for the future is by no means free from difficulties, as that future appears to me, let the war end as it may.

Otone thing, however, I feel certain, the sooner we stop fighting the better it will be for both parties. No peace can be permanent which is not based on principles of justice and truth. The sword never has, and never will procure such a peace. The destruction which attends it, to life and property—to mortality and law—the wicked passions which it arouses, are all in the way of justice and truth, and while human nature remains as it is, will only obscure them.

All of which proves that Mr. Parsons is a moral philosopher and had had enough fighting. A cessation of hostilities while "strengthening our military resources" to negotiate for the restoration of a Union impossible to restore would have been wise; and this proves the truth of the statement made by Union men at the time, viz.: that the Democracy proposed to treat with the rebels for a peaceable dissolution of the Union, hence the philosophizing about two *hostile* republics. Further to prove his belief in moral forces, Mr. Parsons has made

speeches for the Northern market, which have misled President Johnson, Horace Greeley, and others of undoubted loyalty, while in Alabama he reinstated the Confederacy and crushed Union men with the iron hand of power, and freely declared that coming back into the Union was a most painful necessity, and that he would have much preferred becoming a subject of France or England.

Alabama Governors.

A delegation of Alabamians, consisting of Lewis E. Parsons, Joseph C. Bradley, members of the Alabama rebel Legislature, and Colonel J. J. Seibels, then in the rebel army, were deputed to attend the convention at Chicago, in 1864, for the purpose of negotiating terms of peace with the Democratic leaders in that convention, upon the basis of separate nationality, provided the Democratic party should carry the election. The subject was laid before Jefferson Davis, and application made for permission to pass the rebel lines, which was refused, and the embassy was, therefore, abandoned.

Among the most cruel and despotic acts of the Legislature of Alabama, was a bill reported by Mr. Parsons from the Judiciary Committee, on the 29th of August, 1863, passed into a law and approved on the same day: "To aid the Confederate government in arresting deserters, and for other purposes."

It required all persons, male and female, in the State, to give information that would lead to the arrest and return of all persons in the military service of the Confederate States; made it the duty of citizens to aid the enrolling officers; declared it felony, punishable with fine and imprisonment, to refuse or neglect to perform any of the duties imposed by the bill, and, especially, to harbor, assist or aid the escape of soldiers or conscripts from the army or navy, or from any camp of instruction; authorized the use of the jails of the State as places of confinement; put the whole military of the several counties at the disposal of enrolling officers, and appropriated one hundred thousand dollars to carry the law into effect. It was under this law that the boys of poor Union men were hunted down, in the mountain districts of Alabama, with blood-hounds; and that their mothers, wives and sisters

were arrested and confined in jails and log pens, to force them to tell the whereabouts of their kindred. Still with this record of treason and crime, this moral philosopher comes here last June; deceives the President and Cabinet into the belief of his loyalty throughout the war, and his efforts at peace; receives the appointment of Provisional Governor; goes home; keeps the secession party intact; employs the Federal patronage to ensure his own and the elevation of his friends and coworkers in rebellion, to place and political power; and renders the whole State of Alabama ten-fold more disloyal and bitter against the Government than at any period during the war.

Mr. Robert M. Patton, Governor elect, was elected to the Senate in 1859, and continued until the 10th of November, 1862, serving as President thereof from October, 1861, to the time above stated. He was an active coworker in treason; advocated, in the Senate, the disarming of the Union men of North Alabama, to prevent their resistance to the authority of the Confederacy, and the adoption of such measures as would restrain them from joining the Federal army; canvassed North Alabama in behalf of the cotton loan; was the agent of the Confederacy for the disposal of Confederate bonds, to show his confidence in which he invested some forty thousand dollars, individually; put his twosons into the Confederate army, both of whom were killed; and, until the collapse of the rebellion, no one man, in the State of Alabama, did more than himself to sustain its cause and destroy the Government of the United States, making immense sacrifices and enduring immense labors to aid the rebel General Hood to cross the Tennessee River, at Florence, in his invasion of the State of Tennessee, and to recross in his disastrous retreat. Upon this ground the rebel element of the State based and urged his claims to be Governor; and he is now actively engaged in organizing the militia of the State, out of the late soldiers of the rebel army, of whom he has one hundred and three companies; who, when the troops shall have been withdrawn, will be his pliant tools, ready and eager to engage in a bloody crusade against the negro and poor (Union) white men.

New Slave Code of Alabama.

The following bill we cut from the *Huntsville Advocate*, of Jan 4, 1866. It was passed into a law by the present Legislature of Alabama and has received the sanction of Governor Patton, the Confederate Cotton Loan agent, into whose hands the destinies of the loyal citizens of that territory have been cruelly surrendered. Reflect for one moment on the infamy which must, through all time, attach to a victorious Government which authorizes its traitor enemies thus to legislate for its devoted, loyal friends! Surely our old Flag might have been spared this deep humiliation! Alas, my country! Must the red, right arm of war be again lifted, to teach you that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, that justice is the foundation of his throne; and that for all these things, He will bring us into judgment?

The following is a copy of the act passed by our Legislature to prevent freedmen and other persons from owning fire-arms and carrying concealed weapons:

Sec. 1. That it shall not be lawful for any freedman, mulatto, or free person of color in this State, to own fire arms, or carry about his person a pistol or other deadly weapon.

Sec. 2. That after the 20th day of January 1866, any person thus offending may be arrested upon the warrant of any acting Justice of the Peace, and upon conviction fined any sum not exceeding one hundred dollars or imprisoned in the county jail, or put to labor on the public works of any county, incorporated town, city or village, for any term not exceeding three months.

Sec. 3. That if any gun, pistol or other deadly weapon be found in the possession of any freedman, mulatto, or free person of color, the same may by any Justice of the Peace, Sheriff or constable be taken from such freedman, mulatto or free person of color; and if such person is proved to be the owner thereof, the same shall upon an order of any Justice of the Peace, be sold, and the proceeds thereof paid over to such freedman, mulatto, or person of color owning the same.

Sec. 4. That it shall not be lawful for any person to sell, give or lend fire-arms or ammunition of any description whatever, to any freedman, free negro or mulatto; and any person so violating the provisions of this act shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof, shall be fined in the sum of not less than fifty, nor more than one hundred dollars, at the discretion of the jury trying the case.









